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RECONCILIATIONS

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by

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Also Remarks upon the Same Occasion

by

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RECONCILIATIONS

THIS is one of the great New Testament words whose meaning, and the manner of whose use, ought to have saved us from the horror of certain lines of teaching miscalled theology or divinity, because they dishonoured God and were something less than human; picturing and presenting an angry God; visiting His wrath upon the offending race of man in the person of His Son, so that He might first wreak and satisfy His vengeance and then receive the race to sovereign favour. The meaning of the word, I think one might almost dare to say from its root, is one-another-ness; and the manner of its use is always the reconciliation of men to God and not of God to men, because the alienation and the estrangement are not of God from men, but of man from God: the One always loving, waiting, pleading; the other, strayed away, lost, forgetful, faithless, until somehow he could come to himself, and having come to himself, could come to God; the One hating sin because He so loved men, and the other hating God because he so loved sin.

I am not here to-night to preach a sermon, and yet, as one of those to whom has been given the ministry of reconciliation, I like to say and to hear the blessed words of Holy Scripture: "That He might reconcile both to God by the cross." "Who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ." "You that were enemies, yet now hath He reconciled." "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." "We pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

A year ago, in Boston, it came my turn in the seniority of succession, which rules such things with us, to preach the sermon before the General Convention, and the subject of that sermon I think I may say, was conciliation without compromise, by means of comprehensiveness. I was dwelling then upon the estrangements and separations among Christians,—the Roman Catholic Church, the Reformed Catholic Church and the Reformed Churches, calling themselves by different names, all Protestants. Now, by your courteous invitation I am here to-night, proposing to take up the same thought and follow it along another line. I think no one can fail to feel that in certain ways, lines of cleavage are getting more marked in this Protestant Episcopal Church; estrangements, antagonisms, alienations, contentions, controversies. It is a condition of things neither

seemly nor helpful to the interior strength of the Church, nor to its attractive presentation to the world. When license takes the place of liberty, "in doubtful things," and quarreling the place of charity, "in all things," there is not much hope of unity "in necessary things." I am quite ready to believe that the divisions and differences among us are in part, at least, exaggerated. To a degree they must exist because of the varying tastes and temperaments and tendencies and traditions of men. Where they are insisted on as essential, crowded into conspicuous notice and dwelt on as the only important matters, the fault, I believe, is not in temperaments, but in tempers. I am more than ready to believe that a mere Chinese exactness of absolute uniformity, in the teaching of religion or in the conduct of worship, is as undesirable as it is unnatural. I do not take much stock in the possibility of a directory of worship for the whole Church which should bring all our differences to a common denominator. The leaves of the trees and the flowers of the field, and the faces of men differ each from the other, in form, in colour, in expression. So I think must the utterances of the spiritual life differ in religious opinions and in ritual forms. But surely there are certain types which mark off the species clearly enough to make racial distinctions almost self-evident. Anything

that preserves the essential type has the right to the family name, be it an oak tree, a lily, or a man. There may come in deformities, disfigurations which make recognition difficult, but somewhere, down underneath, the character is stamped. I am not going to deal with these types, these essential elements, these fundamental principles, these radical facts, but rather with what the gardeners call a sport, a queer production, purely individual, absolutely peculiar. It is enough I think to say, that, so far as teaching goes, either by word of mouth or by form of worship, the form, the type, must be the Book of Common Prayer, not in its letter merely, but in its tone and its spirit; bearing in mind that so far as doctrine goes, it is set forth in the Creeds and the Offices, and, although not so much, in the Articles of Religion; and bearing also in mind, that although neither extreme statement, that everything not prohibited is permitted, or that everything not permitted is prohibited, is true, it is still true that what one might call the tone, the atmosphere of the Book of Common Prayer is as plain, as positive and as peremptory as its definite statements in Rubric or in Creed.

I find, in an address of the Bishop of Rochester, now Bishop of Southwark, to his Diocesan Conference in 1898, something which seems to have been written under very much the same

impression and with very much the same purpose as I am writing now.

"There was, we all agree, at the time of the Reformation, a vast accretion of what encumbered and distorted truth and hindered the life of true spiritual religion; there was, do we not also all agree, a passionate and destructive reaction. The Church's middle way was not along a precarious knife-edge; it was, and is, a real attempt to find broad ground, on which there was room for the united play of authority and of liberty, of tradition and of protest. But of course, within such tolerant limits, there was and is, room for very different men. There must be those, who will not touch by use, things which have been grievously abused. There must be those who will not let abuse, however grievous, rob them of lawful and wholesome use. Against those who use any ceremony with timidity, mindful of the hurt done by ceremonialism to religion, are to be set those who hear, in any complaint against ceremonialism, nothing but mutterings of the old violence which broke down all the carved work of our sanctuary with axes and hammers. Those to whom plain, strong, clear language of real Divine action, grace, and presence in sacred and appointed things always suggests the neighborhood, or even worse, of materializing, unworthy and superstitious errors, must live in mutual

patience with those who can see, in the most legitimate dread of such errors, nothing but the signs of disbelief in anything more real and objective than a pious stirring up of one's own emotions."

With this behind us as our historic position and with this before us as our guide, there are varieties and differences among us so great, that to a casual observer we hardly seem, all of us, to be holding the same faith, for, to an outsider and sometimes to an insider, the service is hardly recognizable as the service of the Prayer Book. I remember a dear and devoted woman saying to me once that she never expected to feel a sense of indebtedness to Pontius Pilate for anything, but that once, coming in late (for a celebration on a Saint's Day) to a church to which she did not often go, she found herself bewildered as to what part of the service was being said, when suddenly the only distinct words that reached her ear were "Pontius Pilate," and she knew then that they must be saying or singing the Creed. How can we bring about some reconciliation between the many congregations where (a) as Dr. Percival said, the service is conducted on the theory that anything that is Roman must likewise be catholic, and therefore right; (b) where (I still quote Dr. Percival) anything that is Roman is therefore undesirable and probably wrong and to be avoided; and (c) where

there is no concern or care about the ritual, which seems a sort of haphazard accident. Or, again, (a) where the teaching is spent largely upon confession, the real presence, prayer for the dead, etc.; (b) where the stress is exclusively laid upon civil, social, political, current topics, embroidered a little with the Gospel by means of a verse from the Bible; the sermon being preached, as my father used to say, "from, and a good way from, the text;" (c) where the preacher delights in confusing the minds of the listeners by feeding them with the crude and indigestible last discoveries of the most self-assertive, destructive critic of the Holy Scriptures. Now the hope of reconciliation lies, it seems to me, in the first place, in cultivating the temper of not exaggerating or distorting either the words or the worship of those from whom we differ, and in the next place, in avoiding the exaggeration into undue prominence of words or acts. Let me take this last first. One of my old clergy told me the other day that I said to him in the beginning of his ministry, "George, you can do anything you have a mind to, if only you will not call names." I think his recollection is a little tinctured with imagination, but it has in it a certain element of truth. If a ritualist, for instance, would consent to give up the word "mass" and call the Liturgy what the Prayer Book calls it, it would pacify a

good many people whom the word disturbs. And I think, if those of us who do not like the word would realize that its mischief is not in the meaning, but in its association; that lots of people who like to use the word do not mean any more by it than "the Holy Communion;" and that it is hardly fair to fire the thirty-first Article of Religion at everybody who uses the word, because that attacks not the word but a certain meaning and a certain use of it, it would help matters on the other side.

In the same line, I cannot but think that on the one hand, public notice of offering the Holy Communion for the repose of the soul of someone deceased is an unwarranted perversion of the plain meaning of words. The Church includes at every celebration "all God's servants departed this life in His faith and fear," when, in the Prayer of Consecration, she prays "that we and all Thy whole Church may obtain remission of our sins," that is, the sins of the living, "and all other benefits of His passion." On the other hand, it does not follow that the pious practice of the commemoration of the faithful dead (I wish we would not call it Prayers for the Dead) is, or is held to be, by those who use the words, an acceptance of the Mediaeval Roman doctrine of purgatory. I do not believe anybody in this Church holds or teaches "that blasphemous fable and dangerous deceit." When

I approach the question of the reservation of the consecrated element or elements of the Holy Communion, I am on a different line. It is, I believe, absolutely forbidden in this Church. At the same time if it could be, or when it could be, simply in order to communicate the sick in an outbreak of pestilence or under some rare stress of individual demand, it might be tolerated; but when it is reserved for adoration, when it is used for that most modern and most mischievous service called the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, it is an intolerable violation of Scriptural teaching and catholic practice. But it seems to me not fair to attribute this motive or this habit, as the object for which a priest *might* reserve the elements.

We are called upon, too, I think, to get at some rapprochement about the divine liturgy as it is called, but nothing is more marked than the deep line of demarkation which is drawn here. It begins with the free and frequent employment of the words "the blessed sacrament," as though the sacrament of Holy Baptism were somehow less blessed than the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It is part and parcel of a phraseology which needs correcting and toning down. "The real presence," "the blessed sacrament," "the holy sacrifice," they are all words containing truth, but most liable to misuse and misunderstanding. And then it goes on with the

manner of the celebrant and of the celebration. Take the matter of vestments. I cannot agree with the distinguished dignitary of the Church of England who was understood to say the other day that he would not be compelled to wear an alb and chasuble because their use might involve and imply the Roman doctrine of the mass; but I cannot resist the feeling that the highly coloured, heavily embroidered conspicuousness of what are called eucharistic vestments, is an anachronism, an un-Anglicanism and an un-Americanism. At the same time the horror of them as involving every possible element of Latin heresy, transubstantiation, the adoration of the host and what not, is an exaggeration, to say the least of it. And the reconciliation seems to me to lie in the acceptance and use of the fair linen vestments, which ought to content the most extreme believer in the propriety of marking off the celebration of the Holy Communion from the sermon or the choir offices, by a particular dress; and which might be used to great convenience and fitness by those who think that priest is only "presbyter writ short." Or, to come a little further in the same line. If you have on the one hand the exaggeration of prostrations, of the lowering of the voice to intentional inaudibleness in the recitation of the words of consecration; or the tinkling intrusion of a sanctus bell (whose only

possible excuse could be to tell people what they already know, if the prayer is said audibly and in a tongue understood by the people); or the long pauses for the secreta of the officiating priest, distracting to the worshippers; or the tedious fussiness, if I may say the word, in the ablutions, we have on the other hand, what I suppose is meant to be a protest against such things, a very casual reading of the office, casual as to position, careless as to emphasis, beside the rapid rendering of the service without distinctive pauses, and the reservation of the remaining elements either for a reconsecration or for anybody, and nobody knows what. Surely there is room for reconciliation here. It is not necessary to turn the holy table into a sideboard for the display of all the silver that the parish owns, in order to make sure that it shall not possibly be mistaken for an altar, nor is it necessary to put the bread and wine on the holy table, at the beginning of morning prayer, in order to avoid the direction and intention of making the first oblation of them after, and connected with, the offering of the alms. A simpler, less ornate, less histrionic rendering of the service, on the one hand and a more careful and accurately rubrical rendering on the other; the absolute conformity to plain direction of rubrics on the one, and the absolute

avoidance of extra rubrical insertions on the other; —herein lies a way of reconciliation.

Might we not as well on the one hand also avoid the intense insistence on the ancient and venerable usage of fasting communion, not calling it a rule of the Catholic Church, which it is not; not making the number of attendants at the early celebration a chief test of the spiritual condition of a congregation; and realizing, what I am often deeply impressed with, the devout reverence of those, not of us, who communicate more rarely and at the later hours of the day, after most thoughtful preparation, and in most serious and solemn mood. On the other hand, a somewhat less sumptuous breakfast, four or five hours before communicating, would be a reasonable recognition of the dignity of the most holy food that man can take. But to magnify the duty of fasting into a reason for not receiving, and so to multiply the number of non-communicating attendants, or to diminish the frequency of receiving, it seems to me, hardly has in it either wisdom or the warrant of Holy Scripture or the Book of Common Prayer or of early Catholic practice. Of certain other customs it seems to me only fair that people who do not observe them themselves should acknowledge, that the bowing to the Altar is not an act of worship either of the Altar or of the gift that sanctifies it,

but simply a reverent acknowledgment of the fact that it stands for the holiest part of the Church, where the highest act of worship is offered. In this, as in so many other things, I am convinced much might be done toward lessening the opposition to certain practices, if they were more simply done, with less stiffness and drill-sergeantcy conspicuousness, with a sort of unself-conscious instinctiveness and not as though the main object was to call attention to them and to the person who is doing them. I cannot but think that as simplicity and quietness of manner mark the inner breeding of a gentleman among gentlemen, so in religious observance, a devout *manner* is more real, more natural, more reverent than going through a set of studied *mannerisms*.

I am a bit disposed, being used to a very reverent choral rendering of the service of the Prayer Book in my own Cathedral for much of the year, and worshipping with equal happiness and helpfulness in the plainest of services in my summer Church, to suggest some application of adaptability and feasibility to our Church music. There is something certainly unsuitable in a little Church where the plain voice would carry to its farthest end, in assuming the intoning note, meant to reach to a long distance; and there is really an element of absurdity in the attempt to reproduce with a poor

organ, and an untrained and untuneful choir, the effect of a cathedral service.

If I were quite sure that there were no organists, or other *organic* people here I should be disposed to say a word of protest against breaking up the continuity of the service, by the introduction here and there of instrumental interruptions. For instance, between the Preface and the Ter Sanctus, when, after the word "saying" comes a series of notes and tones and chords which no human voice could *say* if it would, or would *say* if it could. Too many interludes between phrases and too many repetitions of words detract, I think, from the reverent effect of the service.

And yet the conversational method of rendering the services and the oratorical and rhetorical reading of the Scriptures or the offices of the Prayer Book is as undesirable as the monotonous intoning by an unmusical voice, and the performance of what is called a high mass, without its necessary adjuncts. Here again, too, I think we may well repudiate the most unseemly phraseology of *high* and *low* masses, the adjectives being worse than the substantive, as if anything could elevate the sublimity or derogate from the dignity of the Holy Eucharist. The summons of the hour to us, as men to whom the ministry of reconciliation is committed, is to publish and pro-

claim its message to mankind. Surely we each one of us must go "first and be reconciled to our brother," before we can impress our ministry upon the world; upon a world that lies in darkness; upon a world that needs the preaching of righteousness; upon a world distracted not only by divisions and differences among those who profess to be its teachers, but disturbed by the utterances of men who discredit the charter of their commission and destroy the value of their credentials, by casting doubt upon the integrity of the Scriptures and denying the obligation of their ordination vows; and alienated because of the impression made by certain ministries which, like the people whom Habakkuk condemned, "sacrifice unto their net and burn incense unto their drag," being more set upon details and displays of means, than on the finding and folding and feeding of the sheep and lambs of the Good Shepherd. The prevalence of the intercession of our Great High Priest "that the world may believe that thou hast sent me," is dependent upon the answer to the prevailing prayer that we may be *one* in the Father and in the Son. And when our souls are brought under the power of this petition, when we are consumed into self-forgetfulness and unwilfulness and unity, then we may hope to win the world for Christ, till "the heathen are given to

Him for His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession."

So, as an old man, an old-fashioned man, an old fogey, if you will, I might ramble on. It is more than fifty years ago since I introduced in Burlington the early celebration of the Holy Communion, the lighting of the two candles on the altar, the changing of colours of the Altar cloths for the seasons, and the keeping of the Holy Days and Octaves with the celebration. It is almost fifty years ago since I sang the Litany with my old friend Dr. Shackleford at the opening service of the New Jersey Convention in Newark, and brought down a storm of denunciation, which my dear father, who was absolutely innocent of it, breasted and bore. I used to be accounted a high churchman then. I do not know and I do not much care what I am accounted now, but I should like to be able, in cordial sympathy with every reverent rendering of our service on the one hand, and in very deep admiration of the spirituality and earnestness of the old-time Evangelical, to hold out a hand on each side and say, "Sirs, ye are brethren;" to help on a better mutual understanding; to combine, in a fair, full, honest presentation of the teaching and worship of our Book of Common Prayer, the men who are just now not "seeing eye to eye." "Human thought, convinced by slow experience, secures gradual advance by

combining seeming opposites into a solid platform for human effort." So writes a recent English philosopher, whom I find only in a quotation, and cannot therefore give the authority of his name. But they are wise words and along the line of my paper to-night.

I am tempted to launch out into deeper and perhaps stormier waters, and to consider this question of reconciliations in a somewhat wider way. We had a petition sent to our Diocesan Convention the other day asking us to join in an effort to secure a change in the law about the chaplains in state institutions. The law as it stands now authorizes the appointment of Catholic and Protestant chaplains, and in the application of the law the Protestant Episcopals were left out. Apparently we were neither one thing nor the other in legal parlance, while really we are both. I suppose this may be considered by some people as an argument for changing the name of the Church, about which I confess I am not much concerned, though I think we might have had a better name from the beginning. Can we not get at the root difficulty in another way? If the Catholics would be a little more protestant, and the Protestants a little more catholic! That is to say, if we could somehow reconcile the tendencies of our affiliations. There are some among us who had dreams of establishing a

union with the Church of Rome. They were turned into nightmares by the letter of the late Bishop of Rome on the subject of Anglican Orders. There are some who have had dreams of an Oriental arrangement of recognition, which the Russian Archbishop of New York has recently and somewhat rudely dispelled. There are some who are drawn more towards a hope, through a federation of Protestant churches, to a possible practical unity. Just where does the Protestant Episcopal Church stand to-day in its relation to this subject? The Latins and the Orientals agree in denying the validity of our episcopate. Knowing as we do that we have it in unbroken succession, and believing, as we proclaim to believe, that it is necessary for the making of a lawful bishop, priest, or deacon in *this Church*, we maintain it. And the Chicago Lambeth Quadrilateral stands to-day before the world with three of its sides in close touch, both with the great Roman Church and with the great Protestant Communions; but the fourth side, the historic episcopate, is either denied or accounted merely a stumbling block. It needs a farther-sighted faith than mine to see the attainment of that oneness for which the Master prayed, but it seems to me an evidence of great short-sightedness, and near-sightedness, and narrow-sightedness, not to see

signs and tokens of a drawing together of Christian men and women in our time in ways that, by and by, will overwhelm the spirit of intolerance, or worse still, of tolerance, of exclusion, of separation.

I have spoken of the Federation of Churches. I believe it would have been wiser in that preliminary conference to have invited the Roman Catholics to come to it. They probably would not have come, but then their outsideness would not have been from our exclusion. I believe it would have been wiser to have admitted the Unitarians, who offered to come, because the Conference was for work without reference to doctrine and because while they still maintain their protest against what they *still think* to be Tri-theism, when really it is the Trinity in Unity, I am not prepared to deny that they are practically Christians, since, in spite of the fact that *verbally* they deny the Deity of Jesus Christ, thousands of them follow Him as their Master, and own Him as their Lord.

The hour calls, it seems to me, not for compromise of truth, not for surrender of convictions, not for paltering with Creed or Order, but for an inspired insight and undersight to feel after and find the truths we hold in common, and in the face of black paganism abroad and black infidelity at home, of indifference and irreligiousness and unrighteousness and misery, to work together as

men worked last summer in New York in the Evangelistic tent meetings, as men worked together in Wales in that mysterious and marvellous awakening, as men are proposing to work together in the federation of church workers, enlarged as I trust it will be. Because the thing that we need above all others is *contact,* the human touch of hands, the Diviner touch of hearts, which shall come so closely to touching the hand and the heart of the All-Man, the Son of Man, the Son of God. Let us protestantize our catholicism, let us catholicize our protestantism. Let us try to find some way to get off "the peak in Darien," on which we stand lonely and silent, while great movements are going on for reaching and winning and saving souls. We have lost our hold on, and our part in, the Young Men's Christian Association, which we might have moulded into wiser ways, and we are losing, year after year, chances of any share in the great waves of religious influence and interest which come in like the sweeping of a tide. We have, I believe, and you believe, the most priceless heritage of Christendom in what Bishop Hobart called "primitive truth and apostolic order." With it we might leaven the whole lump of Christian organization, but the yeast somehow has to be mixed with the dough, and is in danger of souring if it is left too long apart. Some day, please God, there will arise a

seer of visions and a dreamer of dreams, who will find the point and the place and the way of the mingling, and may God speed the day.

Remarks by Bishop Hare

Called upon at a few minutes' notice to say some words after the finished address of my brother and father, Bishop Doane, the first thought which comes to my mind is, "Who shall come after the king?" The phrase is trite, but as it comes to my mind I let it slip from my lips. The differences of which Bishop Doane has spoken are unquestionably very many; but it might be supposed that a Bishop, going about as he does from church to church, now officiating with one brother whom some would call a martinet, and then with another whom others would call a sloven, would learn suppleness and tolerance, if by nothing higher, at least by sheer force of habit. Yet I must confess to enough want of good temper to make it hard for me to endure with patience the endless diversities which mark the rendering of even our most sacred services, and I have to acknowledge that in traveling about outside my own field I often

abstain from communicating simply because I fear that some, to me, strange proceeding on the part of the Celebrant will prove embarrassing and unedifying. Perhaps I need to remember more than I do my profession as a Christian, taught me in the last part of the Baptismal office; namely, that of "continually mortifying all my evil and corrupt affections and daily proceeding in all virtue and Godliness of living." However that may be, we have certainly been too prone to set store by trifles and to magnify little matters into subjects of great dispute. The first disciples, we read, were guilty of something like this on one occasion, and at the end of their journey, at the close of the day, in the quiet of the house where they were resting, the Master turned upon them with the question: "What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?" Startled and ashamed, they held their peace. And may we not fear that at the end of our journey, the Master may arraign us, too, turn our minds back upon our disputations and expose to our humiliated souls their trifling and contemptible character by the searching question: "What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?" And if we have reason to fear that He may disconcert us by this question at the end of our journey, would it not be well if we asked Him to arrest us with this question while we are

still on the road: "What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?" Under such questioning how many matters of dispute which repel us from each other would fall away from us, and how singular and unifying in its grandeur would appear that great confession which unites us—*The Apostles' Creed.*

It is my privilege to deliver a yearly course of talks on religion in the Chapel of my All Saints' School for girls, and it is my custom each year at an early stage of the course, to place before them on the Lectern, somewhat conspicuously, a long row of books. The attention and curiosity of the students having been thus excited, I tell them that I have set before them the books which contain the fundamental teachings of pretty much all the Christian bodies under Heaven. For here—taking up a book—I have a Breviary or a Missal of the Church of Rome; and here a Directory of Worship of the followers of Luther, Rome's great opponent; and here a Westminster Confession of the Presbyterians; and here the Book of Discipline of the Methodists; and here the Liturgy of the Greek Church; and here, the Prayer Book of the Church of England; and here our own Prayer Book; and so on. These books are in many of their contents very diverse, but in one thing they all agree. In every one of them you will find *The Apostles' Creed*—

(Here I take up the several books one by one and give the exact page on which the Creed is found)—so that, had I at this moment the power to make them all hear my summons, I could, in the words of that Creed, marshal all the Christians under Heaven, of all nations and languages, and we could all, with one mind and one mouth, make our grand confession to God in this great but simple summary of all the chief things a Christian ought to know for his soul's health.

"Now, girls," I conclude, "you will all have your trials—unhappy homes, blighted affections, great physical suffering; or some clever skeptic may make you doubt your Bible and think that religion after all is but a conflict of opinions; but always remember that back of all differences among Christians, back of all Bible difficulties, stand a multitude of persons which no man can number, viz: All Christians under Heaven from the first day even until now, who, whatever their differences, have one heart and one mind about all the great truths which men need to live by and to die by, and they all confess this faith with one mouth in *'The Apostles' Creed.'*" We all then stand up and say the Creed together. As the pupils come from all sorts of Christian bodies and some have had no Christian teaching whatsoever, the effect may be imagined.